

A vibrant sunset scene with a bright sun low on the horizon, casting a golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. The sky transitions from deep orange to a lighter yellow near the sun. Silhouettes of mountains are visible in the background.

Find your place under the sun

**10 steps to achieving
success as an entrepreneur**

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Are you letting constraints be a road block to your future as a successful Entrepreneur? Why?

We all know that life is full of barriers waiting to be broken down. Our inactions are often the consequences of our inner fears. We're afraid, so we don't take action because it protects us from our greatest fears. In fact we let our fears decide what is to be our future. Let's think about this for a minute.

If anyone of us with a valid driving permit, a map and car were asked to drive from our home community to another community, located at the opposite end of Canada we would likely decide 'yes, I can do this'. Why? We'd get ourselves a map, select our roads, then drive. We'd likely have a minimum of sleep and many coffee stops along the way. Over the long distance we would need to make a few course corrections because of flooded roads or construction, but days later we would reach our destination and celebrate our success and go to sleep.

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So why is it that in some circumstances we let our fears control our destiny, when in other circumstance we're able to succeed? In one circumstance we procrastinate and make ourselves believe that we are thinking this great idea through, while in the other we get a map, plan our way and take action.

Achieving success as an entrepreneur is like driving a car from one end of the country to another, you don't drive blindly, you build a plan which gives you the needed confidence to achieve your objective, and you then get to work, you drive down the road and deal with the many barriers along the way. So why not apply the same rules to becoming a successful entrepreneur.

1. Switch mind set

Visualize 'you' as a successful entrepreneur. Dare to imagine what success would mean to you, to your family and to your community. Stay away from negative people, those that tend to criticize your ideas or your ambitions and those that will tell you that yours is a stupid idea. They're likely hiding behind their own fears.

2. Find yourself a mentor

Surround yourself with positive people those with who you can share a few thoughts and ask questions i.e. the grocery store owner, the catering business owner or what have you, ask the person to be your mentor.

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3. Come up with an idea

You may have one or two already – pick the idea that fits your passions, your goals, strengths, resources and tolerance for risk. It's wise to stay within an area where you have some expertise. But keep in mind that your idea needs to be tested, all you have for now is an assumption that clients will want to buy your offering.

4. Create a plan and test it

You don't need a detailed plan at this stage, but you do need to make sure that a market exists for your idea. First create a series of assumptions about your product, your potential clients, your suppliers, your manufacturing the product. Then go and visit potential clients and suppliers and validate your assumptions. Also test elements including your product features, pricing, branding, and customer experience.

5. Align your assumptions

Adjust those assumptions as you move forward, be focus and don't procrastinate, because if you do have a good idea, a product that customers are willing to buy and suppliers are willing to support you'll need to move fast because if you don't drive your new found opportunity to success, someone else will run with the idea and make it a success.

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6. Sell now to clients

If you have found early adopters for your product, build that basic product as quickly and inexpensively as you can. Keep it simple, offer the minimum feature needed to sell and to start bringing in cash.

7. Make adjustments

Now that you've learned what aspects of your products and marketing works and what doesn't, fix them. If you have made a few sale I's because you had done a few things right too. Tweak, adjust and do what's needed, but start loving those clients by providing them with great service, you'll want them to see you as a true partner in helping them solve their clients problems.

8. Get ready to grow

Now, time has come for you to write a detailed business plan, update your product, your team, your marketing and your financial strategies and while at it it's also time to update your technology, write processes and perhaps bring in an expert or two to help you deal with areas where your skills set may need reinforcement.

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9. Step on the pedal

With a market-tested plan and resources in place it's now time to press on the accelerator. Make sure your team members are on the same page as you, that they understand where you are heading and what their roles and their objectives are. There is no free lunch, everyone needs to achieve clearly identified goals. Be ready to call on coaching expertise when needed and by whatever team member that needs it.

10. Get ready to celebrate your success

Share your thoughts and experiences with us – add to the comment section on the webpage below